CLAIMS:

1. An adjustable locking mechanism for use with an enclosure, comprising:

a housing defining an opening;

a spindle oriented along an axis;

a latching pawl coupled to the spindle, the latching pawl including a latch extending through the opening of the housing, the latching pawl rotatable with the spindle relative to the housing between a first position and a second position in which the latch is configured to engage structure associated with the enclosure, the latching pawl and spindle rotatable relative to the housing alternatively in a first direction toward the first position and in a second direction toward the second position; and

a lock cylinder coupled to the spindle and rotatably coupled to the housing, the lock cylinder configured to cause rotation of the spindle and the latching pawl relative to the housing alternatively in the first and second directions, the lock cylinder configured to provide continued rotation of the spindle in the second direction when the latching pawl has been rotated to the second position to cause rotation of the spindle relative to the latching pawl and to thereby cause movement of the latching pawl along the axis of orientation of the spindle.

2. The adjustable locking mechanism of claim 1 wherein the spindle is threadingly engaged with the latching pawl.

3. The adjustable locking mechanism of claim 1 further comprising a spring coupled to the spindle and the latching pawl biasing the latching pawl against such movement along the axis of orientation of the spindle.

4. The adjustable locking mechanism of claim 3 wherein the spring is a coil spring disposed about the spindle.

5. The adjustable locking mechanism of claim 4 wherein the spring is disposed between the locking pawl and the lock cylinder.

6. The adjustable locking mechanism of 1 wherein the housing defines a bore receiving the lock cylinder.

7. The adjustable locking mechanism of claim 1 wherein the housing includes two walls defining the opening and configured to limit rotation of the

latching pawl, the latching pawl contacting one of the walls when it is in the first position and contacting the other of the walls when it is in the second position.

8. The adjustable locking mechanism of claim 7 wherein the walls extend substantially parallel to the axis of the spindle.

9. The adjustable locking mechanism of claim 7 wherein the degree of rotation of the lock cylinder between the first and second positions of the latching pawl is 90 degrees.

10. The adjustable locking mechanism of claim 1 wherein the opening is configured such that the degree of rotation of the lock cylinder between the first and second positions of the latching pawl is 90 degrees.

11. The adjustable locking mechanism of claim 1 wherein the lock cylinder defines a key hole slot and wherein the housing defines a plurality of indicia configured to align with the key hole slot at alternative positions to designate different rotational positions of the lock cylinder relative to the housing.

12. The adjustable locking mechanism of claim 11 wherein the indicia are disposed 90 degrees apart from each other.

13. The adjustable locking mechanism of claim 1 wherein the spindle defines a recess and the lock cylinder includes a boss received by the recess coupling the spindle and the lock cylinder.

14. The adjustable locking mechanism of claim 1 wherein the spindle includes a top defining a recess and the lock cylinder includes a boss received by the recess coupling the spindle and the lock cylinder.

15. The adjustable locking mechanism of claim 1 wherein the spindle has a bottom end and wherein the adjustable locking mechanism further comprises a cap coupled to the bottom end.

16. The adjustable locking mechanism of claim 15 wherein the cap is removably coupled to the bottom end.

17. The adjustable locking mechanism of claim 15 wherein the cap is removably coupled to the bottom end by snap fit.

18. The adjustable locking mechanism of claim 15 wherein the cap is threadingly engaged with the bottom end.

19. An adjustable locking mechanism for an enclosure comprising:

a housing;

a spindle oriented along an axis;

a latching pawl threadingly engaged with the spindle, the latching pawl including a latch, the latching pawl rotatable with the spindle relative to the housing between a first and a second position in which the latch is configured to engage structure associated with the door, drawer or other enclosure, the latching pawl and spindle rotatable relative to the housing alternatively in a first direction toward the first position and in a second direction toward the second position; and

means for rotating the spindle relative to the housing alternatively in first and second directions, the rotating means configured to cause rotation of the latching pawl between the first and second directions and to permit continued rotation of the spindle in the second direction when the latching pawl has been rotated to the second position to cause rotation of the spindle relative to the latching pawl and to thereby cause movement of the latching pawl along the axis of orientation of the spindle.

20. The spindle of claim 19 wherein the rotating means includes a lock cylinder rotatably coupled to the housing.

21. The spindle of claim 20 wherein the rotating means further includes a pair of walls of the housing defining an opening receiving the latch and configured to limit rotation of the latching pawl.

22. The spindle of claim 19 further comprising a spring disposed about the spindle.

23. An adjustable locking mechanism for an enclosure comprising:

a housing defining a bore and an opening;

a spindle oriented along an axis;

a coil spring disposed about the spindle;

a latching pawl coupled to the spring and threadingly engaged with the spindle, the latching pawl including a latch extending through the opening of the housing, the latching pawl rotatable with the spindle relative to the housing between a first position and a second position in which the latch is configured to engage structure associated with the enclosure, the latching pawl and spindle rotatable

relative to the housing alternatively in a first direction toward the first position and in a second direction toward the second position; and

a lock cylinder received by the bore of the housing and coupled to the spindle, the lock cylinder configured to cause rotation of the spindle and the latching pawl relative to the housing alternatively in the first and second directions, the lock cylinder configured to permit continued rotation of the spindle in the second direction when the latching pawl has been rotated to the second position to cause rotation of the spindle relative to the latching pawl and to thereby cause movement of the latching pawl along the axis of orientation of the spindle.

24. The adjustable locking mechanism of claim 23 wherein the housing includes two walls defining the opening configured to limit rotation of the latching pawl, the latching pawl contacting one of the walls when it is in the first position and contacting the other of the walls when it is in the second position.

25. The adjustable locking mechanism of claim 24 wherein the walls are positioned such that the degree of rotation of the lock cylinder between the first and second positions of the latching pawl is 90 degrees.

26. The adjustable locking mechanism of claim 23 further comprising a cap removably engaged with an end of the spindle.

27. A method for adjustably engaging and disengaging a door with structure associated with the door comprising:

(a) rotating a lock cylinder of a locking mechanism in a first direction to cause a latch of the locking mechanism to engage the structure;

(b) rotating the lock cylinder further in the first direction to cause the latch to increase the engaging force on the structure.

28. The method of claim 27 wherein the latch is threadingly engaged with a spindle of the locking mechanism and during (b) the spindle rotates to cause the latch to move along an axis of orientation of the spindle.

29. The method of claim 28 further including:

(c) rotating the lock cylinder in a second direction to cause the latch of the locking mechanism to disengage the structure.

30. The method of claim 29 wherein during (a) the degree of rotation of the lock cylinder in the first direction has a first magnitude, during (b) the degree of

further rotation of the lock cylinder in the first direction has a second magnitude, and during (c) the degree of rotation of the lock cylinder in the second direction has a third magnitude.

31. The method of claim 30 wherein the first and third magnitudes are substantially the same.

32. The method of claim 29 wherein during (a) the degree of rotation of the lock cylinder in the first direction has a magnitude, and during (c) the degree of rotation of the lock cylinder in the second direction also has said magnitude.

33. The method of claim 32 wherein a key is used to rotate the lock cylinder during (a), (b) and (c) and the key is removable from the lock cylinder in rotational increments equal to said magnitude.

34. The method of claim 33 wherein said magnitude is 90 degrees.